

Madam Speaker,

When Democrats took control of Congress last year, we vowed to work on behalf of all Americans.

Last year, we recognized that middle-class families were struggling to make ends meet, and so we worked hard to ease that economic crunch. We passed billions of dollars in tax relief to middle-income families, increased the minimum wage for the first time in a decade, enacted an energy bill that will save the average family anywhere from \$700 to \$1,000 a year in energy costs, and helped families better afford college.

This was a good start, but as economic indicators continue to head in the wrong direction, we worked with the White House and House Republicans on an economic stimulus package that will provide a real and significant short-term boost to this economy.

The House bipartisan economic stimulus plan is the most progressive package this decade. It will help jumpstart our economy and will provide real assistance to lower-and middle-income families. I hope our friends in the Senate will act on this legislation this week.

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